



# What is diabetes?

Diabetes is a disease in which your blood sugar, or glucose, is too high. Glucose comes from the foods you eat. An organ called the pancreas makes insulin, a hormone, which helps glucose enter cells to be used as energy. When your body can't use insulin the right way, or doesn't produce enough insulin, the sugar can't move into cells and stays in your blood stream. This is called insulin resistance and can lead to diabetes and other health complications.

## Types of Diabetes

### Pre-diabetes

Pre-diabetes is a condition in which blood sugar levels are elevated but not yet high enough to be diagnosed as diabetes. Having pre-diabetes is a risk factor for developing Type 2 diabetes as well as cardiovascular disease.

### Type 1 Diabetes

Type 1 diabetes usually appears in childhood or adolescence. With Type 1, the body is unable to produce insulin, resulting in a buildup of excess sugar in the blood.

### Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. With Type 2, the body doesn't produce enough insulin, or the cells ignore the insulin that is produced. Research has shown that being overweight is a major risk factor for diabetes.

### Gestational Diabetes

Gestational diabetes occurs during pregnancy as a result of excess hormones or the body's inability to increase insulin production.

## Reducing Blood Glucose Levels

To lower the risk of diabetes, the key is to keep your blood glucose levels in control.

Causes of high blood glucose levels

- Inactivity
- Stress
- Illness
- Dehydration
- Menstrual periods
- Alcohol consumption
- Excess carbohydrates
- Short- or long-term pain
- Side effects from other medications
- Fluctuating hormone levels

## Preventing Diabetes Through Nutrition

Foods with a high glycemic index (GI) raise blood glucose. Eating a diet composed of foods with a low glycemic index can help prevent and manage diabetes. Typically, this means reducing carbohydrates and sweets and aiming to increase intake of foods that are low on the glycemic index to control blood sugar. In general, fat and fiber tend to lower the GI of a food.

## Exercise

If you have been diagnosed with pre-diabetes, you have an opportunity to prevent the progression of this condition to Type 2 diabetes. By getting regular exercise, changing your diet, and losing weight, you can play a key role in preventing diabetes. Talk to your doctor about how and when to exercise.

## Here when you need us.

Call: 877-527-4742

TTY: 800.697.0353

Online: [guidanceresources.com](http://guidanceresources.com)

App: GuidanceNow<sup>SM</sup>

Web ID: State of Delaware

